

POLITICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

229

brightly, and the story of how the two warriors pulled the country together after the torments of civil war can never die. He was not a man of genius, perhaps not even a great statesman, but he was an excellent administrator. There is little 10 attract us in his heavy, unromantic, severe personality, greedy of money and power, loving grandeur and ceremony, which looks so drab beside the dazzling colours of his lord. Such a man could never be popular. He had many enemies, and when Henri IV was dead the Duke's career was over, He is redeemed by his sturdy patriotism, and his feet are planted on the solid earth. He fought venality and waste with vigour and success. He had learned the lesson expressed in the memorable words : " *Pauvre paysan, pauvre royaume* ^ *pauvre royaume* ^ *pauvre rot.* " The taxpayer, he realized, must not be driven too hard.

Sully began his labours on the morrow of his fall and worked systematically till the end thirty years later. A wealth, of material was at his disposal. He had kept a fragmentary journal; he had preserved memoranda on important questions discussed in Council, documents which had passed "through his hands, projects and financial reports. There were over three thousand letters, notes on his speeches, conversations with the King. Moreover his secretaries had made notes of the conversation with him, and not his secretaries alone but his doctor and other friends. To separate the gold from the dross was beyond the power of a man more used to handling the sword than the pen. The result is less an autobiography than a voluminous report, materials for history rather than history itself. The part of the four secretarial incense-burners is fully acknowledged. The memoirs, we are told, are what

they, who had been employed in various affairs by the Duke,. knew of his life and what they had learned from his lips.

Sully's apologia is above all the story of a historic friendship. It is proclaimed even in the cumbersome title : "Metnoires des sages et royales Economies d'Etat, domestiques, politiques et militaires de Henri le Grand, Pexemplaire des rois, le prince des vertus, des annes et des lois, le pere en effet de ses peuples frangois; et des Servitudes utiles, obeissances convenables et administrations loyales de Maximilien de Bethune, Tun des plus confidents familiers et utiles soldats et serviteurs du grand Mars des Francois ; dedies à la France, à tous les bons soldats et tous peuples frangois." His father, a Huguenot nobleman, presented the boy at the age of eleven to his future master, who